

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 03895 01 OF 02 080022Z

60

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INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 03895

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, GW

SUBJECT: POLITICAL TERRORISM IN THE FRG; SETTING THE
STAGE FOR THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE.

REF: L) BONN 18677, 12/3/74, 2) BONN 19034, 12/10/74,
AND 3) BONN 3584

SUMMARY: THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT IS FACED WITH A TWO-
HORNED DILEMMA IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE LORENZ KID-
NAPPING: WILL THE CAPITULATION OF THE AUTHORITIES TO THE
KIDNAPPERS ENCOURAGE FURTHER TERRORISTS ACTS, AND HOW
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PAGE 02 BONN 03895 01 OF 02 080022Z

SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT REACT IN SUCH CASES, AND THE GENE-

RAL QUESTION OF HOW THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY CAN COPE WITH POLITICAL VIOLENCE WHILE MAINTAINING ITS DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND INSTITUTIONS. SOLVING THESE PROBLEMS IS FURTHER COMPLICATED FOR THE GOVERNMENT BY THE SENSE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL INSECURITY AMONG THE GERMAN PUBLIC WITH ALL THE POLITICAL COMPLICATIONS WHICH FLOW FROM SUCH A SITUATION. THE OPPOSITION IS CRITICAL OF THE GOVERNMENT FOR NOT HAVING FACED UP TO THE PROBLEMS IN THE PAST. WHAT THE POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC REACTION WOULD BE TO A NEW WAVE OF TERRORISM IN THE WAKE OF THE LORENZ KIDNAPPING IS UNCERTAIN. THE BUNDESTAG DEBATES NEXT WEEK SHOULD INDICATE THE OUTLINES OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON THIS ISSUE

. END

SUMMARY

1. THERE HAS BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF SOUL-SEARCHING IN THE PRESS AND AMONG POLITICAL LEADERS AS TO HOW THE PRIORITY ACCORDED TO SAVE LORENZ' LIFE IS COMPATIBLE WITH MAINTAINING THE PRESTIGE AND THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE. NO ONE HAS BEEN ABLE TO GO BEYOND FORMULATING THE DILEMMA IN THESE TERMS TO SUGGESTING A SOLUTION THAT WOULD MEET BOTH OBJECTIVES. FROM A DOMESTIC POLITICAL STANDPOINT THE GOVERNMENT IS ON FIRM GROUND IN THAT ITS EFFORTS TO INCLUDE ALL DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE DECISIONS CONCERNING THE LORENZ KIDNAPPING WERE SUCCESSFUL. FURTHERMORE, PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE DECISION WAS DEMONSTRATED IN A POLL WHICH SHOWED THAT 56 OF THOSE QUESTIONED SUPPORTED GIVING INTO THE DEMANDS OF THE TERRORISTS TO SAVE LORENZ' LIFE WHILE 31 SUPPORTED A "TOUGH" POSITION VIS A VIS THE KIDNAPPERS AND 13 WERE UNDECIDED. THUS, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR OPPOSITION CRITICS TO POINT A FINGER AT THE WAY THE GOVERNMENT HANDLED THE CRISIS.

2. HOWEVER, THE DEEPER AND MORE FAR REACHING QUESTION OF MAINTAINING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE "RECHTSTAAT" (STATE BASED ON LAW) IN THE FACE OF POLITICAL TERRORISM IS A CENTRAL POLITICAL PROBLEM WHICH HAS BEEN EXACERBATED BY THE FACT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF DETERMINED

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PAGE 03 BONN 03895 01 OF 02 080022Z

ANARCHISTS WERE ABLE TO BULLY THE GOVERNMENT OF A MODERN INDUSTRIAL STATE INTO COMPLIANCE WITH ITS DEMANDS. IN COMING TO GRIPS WITH THIS PROBLEM THE GOVERNMENT IS MOST VULNERABLE TO CRITICISM.

3. THE PUBLIC SOLIDARITY DEMONSTRATED BY ALL MAJOR POLITICAL LEADERS DURING THE PERIOD WHEN LORENZ WAS STILL IN CAPTIVITY STARTED TO CRUMBLE EVEN BEFORE

HE WAS RELEASED. THE FIRST VOLLEYS IN THE INTERNAL SECURITY DEBATE WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE BUNDESTAG NEXT WEEK WERE FIRED EVEN BEFORE LORENZ WAS FREED UNHARMED. CSU DEPUTY RICHARD JAEGER AND CDU DEPUTY DREGGER CALLED FOR RESUMPTION OF THE DEATH SENTENCE IN GERMANY IN CASES WHERE A KIDNAP VICTIM WAS MURDERED. HOWEVER, PETER LORENZ HIMSELF IN A PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING HIS RELEASE STATED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE DEATH SENTENCE AND DID NOT BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE RESUMED. PUBLIC INSECURITY IS FURTHER FED BY SOME OF THE CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT, PARTICULARLY THE SPRINGER

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PAGE 01 BONN 03895 02 OF 02 080020Z

60

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 03895

PRESS. FOR EXAMPLE, EVEN BEFORE LORENZ WAS RELEASED "DIE WELT" SENT OUT TELEGRAMS TO MAJOR POLITICAL LEADERS ASKING THEM TO STATE WHAT THEY RECOMMEND SHOULD BE DONE IF THEY WERE THE VICTIMS OF KIDNAPPING (MOST POLITICIANS REFUSED TO REPLY).

4. THE CDU/CSU FRAKTION IN THE BUNDESTAG WILL INTRODUCE NEXT WEEK PROPOSALS AMENDING THE CRIMINAL CODE WHICH WOULD RESULT IN STRICTER LAWS OF ASSEMBLY AS WELL AS CONTROLS UPON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLE ACCUSED OF CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BONN 03895 02 OF 02 080020Z

TERRORIST ACTS AND THEIR LAWYERS. WHILE THESE PROPOSED CHANGES PROVIDE THE FORMAL OPPORTUNITY FOR THE DEBATE IT IS THE SOCIAL/LIBERAL COALITION'S GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTERNAL SECURITY THAT WILL BE THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE EXCHANGE. THE OPPOSITION WILL ARGUE THAT THE COALITION'S PERMISSIVENESS (AND OFTEN SYMPATHY) FOR LEFTWING DEMONSTRATIONS AND UNREST GOING BACK TO THE UNIVERSITY UPHEAVALS IN THE LATE 60'S SET THE STAGE AND PROVIDED THE CLIMATE FOR THE PRESENT OUTBREAK OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE. CDU POLITICIANS (E.G. KOHL) HAVE BEGUN TO STRESS THE INTERNAL SECURITY ISSUE IN THE LAENDER ELECTION CAMPAIGNS. IN RESPONSE THE GOVERNMENT'S REACTION, AT LEAST PARTIALLY AIMED AT REDUCING POTENTIAL CRITICISM FOR BEING SOFT ON TERRORISTS, WAS TO LAUNCH A LARGE-SCALE ANTI-TERRORIST CAMPAIGN EFFORT IN BERLIN TO FIND THE KIDNAPPERS, REINFORCING THE BERLIN POLICE WITH POLICEMEN FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND SENDING THE GENERALBUNDESANWALT (CHIEF FEDERAL PROSECUTOR) TO BERLIN.

5. THE STABILITY OF POST-WAR GERMANY HAS ENABLED THE SOCIETY TO ENDURE POLITICAL TERRORISM TO THIS POINT INCLUDING THE BAADER-MEINHOF BOMBINGS, THE MURDER OF BERLIN JUDGE DRENKMAN AND THE LORENZ KIDNAPPING WITHOUT SERIOUS DAMAGE TO THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL FABRIC. GERMAN DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS ARE HEALTHY AND ACCEPTED THROUGHOUT THE SOCIETY. HOWEVER, THE SENSE OF HELPLESSNESS IN THE FACE OF TERRORISM HAS HEIGHTENED SIGNIFICANCE IN A COUNTRY WHERE FEW PEOPLE DEEP DOWN REALLY BELIEVE THAT THEIR POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS ARE AS STABLE AND EFFECTIVE AS THE RECORD OF THE PAST 25 YEARS WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE.

6. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHAT THE REACTION OF THE GERMAN PUBLIC AND POLITICIANS WOULD BE IF THE LORENZ KIDNAPPING IS JUST THE BEGINNING

OF A SERIES OF ACTS OF POLITICAL TERRORISM. EVEN IF
THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL TERRORIST ACTS, HOWEVER, GERMAN
POLITICAL LEADERS OF ALL THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES HAVE
THEIR WORK CUT OUT FOR THEM IF THEY ARE TO ACT RESPONSI-
BLY AND RESTRAINED (E.G., AVOID THE TEMPTATION TO MANI-
PULATE INSECURITY AND EMOTION FOR SHORT-TERM POLITICAL
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PAGE 03 BONN 03895 02 OF 02 080020Z

GAIN) IN PRESERVING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. THEBUNDESTAG
DEBATE NEXT WEEK WILL SERVE TO INDICATE THE FORM AND
CONTENT OF THE FUTURE POLITICAL DEBATE ON INTERNAL
SECURITY.
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